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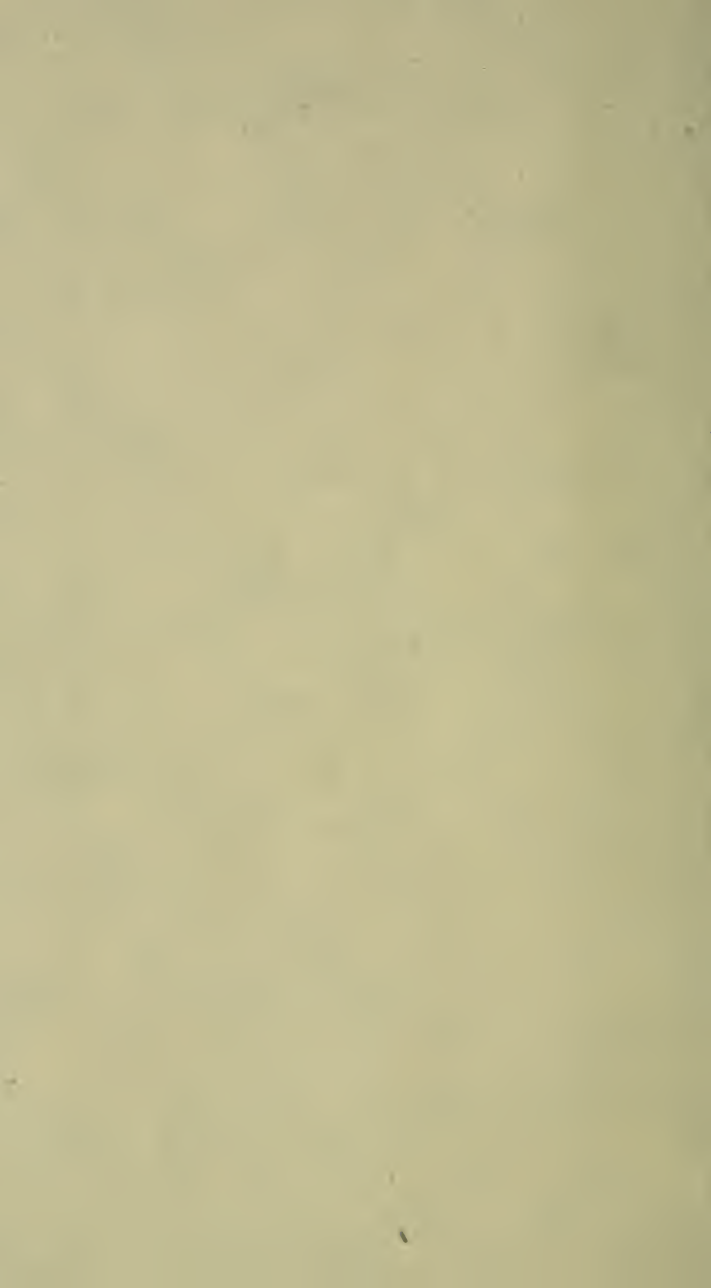


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THE ANGELUS

JEAN FRANCOIS MILLET



# The Angelus

*The Angel of the Lord announced unto Mary;  
And she conceived of the Holy Ghost. (Luke 1.)*

℣, *Hail! Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. (Luke 1)*

℣, *Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. (Council of Ephesus.)*

*“Behold the handmaid of the Lord:  
May it be done to me according to thy word.” (Luke 1)*

℣, *Hail! Mary, etc.*

℣, *Holy Mary, etc.*

*And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Thanks be to God! (John 1:14)*

℣, *Hail! Mary, etc.*

℣, *Holy Mary, etc.*

℣, *Pray for us, O Holy Mother God.*

℣, *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

*Let us pray:*

*Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation, Christ Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His passion and cross be brought to glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

*May the divine assistance always remain with us.*

*And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*



*Inc. Carr, John Joseph*

# The Angelus

BY

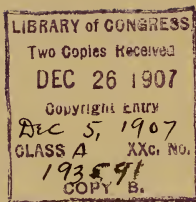
LEO GREGORY, *pseud.*

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The H. H. Publishing Co.

Aurora, Illinois

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Dedication:

To my Mother,  
from whose saintly lips I learned  
The Angelus.



## Foreword.

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THE ANGELUS is a poem for serious people. The author hopes to please thoughtful men and women, people who take a serious view in life, people who are interested in the great world problems, people who can see present conditions in the world, with all the evil but also with all the good.

Mr. Markham, who wrote "The Man With The Hoe," has produced a splendid literary work. It is literature, find what fault we may with it. It is faithful to the canvas he looked upon.

However, I feel it ought to have a companion poem, just as "The Man With The Hoe" has a companion picture,— "The Angelus"—both by the same painter, Jean Francois Millet. Millet perhaps never thought of them as companion pieces. He perhaps painted only what he saw at the time of each composition. He painted "The Angelus" in 1859;

"The Man With The Hoe," in 1863. He may not have troubled his head about the lessons—at least all the lessons—conveyed by them. He painted "The Angelus" because the sight of peasants reciting the angelus at evening was familiar to him, and gave him an opportunity of putting on canvas the glorious golden colors of the sunset. As a painter, he thought first of the picture, the color scheme and other things that would naturally appeal to an artist. I recollect standing before the original painting when it was on exhibition in Chicago, and what struck me as the crowning excellence of the picture was the golden sunset, atmosphere and sky. One could actually see through the atmosphere to the church spire in the village. One would almost fancy hearing the angelus bell. The golden sunset, atmosphere and sky, were the features that most impressed me. It was a scene in nature—not a mere picture. No doubt, these features were what struck Millet. The theology and philosophy and social problems suggested by the subject to other men of other minds may never have occurred to him. None the less, we are not bound to limit ourselves to the picture, considered as a painting. We are free to consider the subject from other points of view. His painting suggests to us all what the angelus, their prayer, suggests. It is perfectly proper for us to consider the condition of the masses represented by his two peasants,—their labor, their happiness, their faith, and their faith as being the cause of their contentment. We are free to draw whatever lessons may be conveyed to us by that scene, reproduced a million times every day in France; and not only there, but in every part of the Christian world.

The picture may most appropriately be looked upon as a text for the philosopher, the theologian, the sociologist, the statesman, the laboring man.

Mr. Markham described "The Man With The Hoe." When Millet painted it, he may simply have seen there only an opportunity for a picture. I have never seen the original, and cannot even guess the points that would naturally appeal



to a painter. He may have thought this peasant a specimen of the discouraged type of laboring man, the lonely, poor, oppressed, degraded working man to be found in all parts of the world. He may have intended to show how a part of the world has been oppressed and degraded by the other part. He may have looked on it as a warning to the rich and great to reform their conduct in regard to the poor. He may have had all the thoughts expressed by Markham.

Then again, he may not have entertained one of them. He may simply have seen a good subject for the brush, a subject that appealed to him merely as a painter.

Considering the two pictures as companion pieces, we are justified in taking them as texts for meditation. It seems to me a mistake to publish the thoughts suggested by "The Man With The Hoe," and leave unpublished the thoughts suggested by "The Angelus."

I do not believe that the former is a picture of the poor, of the working man, as a class, the world over. It is the picture held up by atheistic socialists. It is not true in fact of the masses as a whole. In a large view of the world, there are comparatively few people whose condition can justify the protest and prophesies of Mr. Markham. The people as a whole, at least in Christian countries, are not too poor to lead a contented, hopeful life. And what makes them contented and hopeful is religion, implied in "The Angelus."

I do not say that Markham holds socialistic views of an exaggerated kind. He may have tried to express the sentiments suggested by that one picture he saw, "The Man With The Hoe."

However, just now, there are too many people of glib tongue, people able to write, who take a narrow view of world problems, who at least become too much impressed with the ills they see, too impatient with the tardy manner in which the ruling classes right the wrongs of the masses. There are evils that need correction. The condition of the

laboring classes needs improving. But it is false to represent the rulers of the world as wholly indifferent, wholly unwilling to improve the condition of the poor. The world has been steadily growing better since the birth of Christ, and because of His birth and work and death. The rulers of the world have become ready and anxious to do better by the working man. Nor must we forget that the poor are not all angels. The poor have their vices and weaknesses just as well as the rich have. When the angels of the nativity sang peace on earth, they said, "Peace on Earth to men of good will," thereby implying that all men are not at all times men of good will. The masses are not by any means willing at all times to take advantage of blessings offered them. They have often abused privileges, and at times forced rulers to use the iron gauntlet. The dictator has often been the only logical man to save the people from their own madness and folly.

Socialists of the evil kind are wont to attribute all the crimes, follies, vices, poverty, wretchedness and discouragement of the poor to the oppression of the rich and powerful. That is to beg the question. That is to represent men as willing to accept the truth when presented clearly, and to do the right when they see it. We know that men are not so angelic. All men, rich and poor, high and low, have good and evil impulses. They are not at all times ready to accept truth and do right. We know that at times they want to forget the truth and do the wrong. They are tempted to do wrong, and are willing to yield to the temptation; and they do not want at such times to be told the truth or be reminded of virtue. They want to gratify their passion first. Then, later on in life, they fancy they will be ready to accept truth and practice virtue.

To say that the masses would all accept the truth and do the right, if the rich and powerful would do their duty, is to beg the question, to forget the lessons of history, to forget our own experience and our observation of people around us. All men are not men of good will, and very few, if any, are

men of good will at all times. Scripture has it, the man who says he has no sin, is a liar. If all men sin, they must, at the time they sin, not be men of good will.

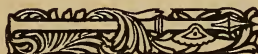
After all has been said, it must be admitted that conditions are changing constantly for the better. Individual instances of oppression and wrong will be to the end of the race, but the world as a whole is growing better and better every day in every way.

And the cause of this improvement is religion. The grace of God works on every individual soul, even in regions where there may be no organized system of religion. In those favored places where Christianity prevails, the people as individuals and as a whole, are steadily, though slowly, rising to a higher plane.

There are lapses in individuals, and in whole peoples at times, but the trend of the human stream is ever in the right direction, and that is towards truth and right.

LEO GREGORY.

March 25, 1907.



## A Song.

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T INTERVALS for years I heard  
song;  
So distant voice that sang or  
dull mine ear,  
I knew not whence it came, from  
earth or heaven:

Or bird on bough of forest tree remote,  
Or lover singing courage to faint heart,  
Or mother crooning lullaby to babe,  
Or angel host beyond the bourne of sense  
In chorus hymning praises unto God  
So loudly echo reached my raptured soul,  
I knew not, though I knew I heard a song.  
I prayed that God send near who sang the song,  
Or that He would refine my sense to hear.  
My prayer is answered: now I sing the song,  
A song to cheer the poor, "The Angelus."

## The Angelus.

---



HE golden sunset of an autumn  
day ;

The distant village with its cross-  
tipped spire,

The church bell faintly rings the  
Angelus :

Two weary toilers, man and wife, look up  
With grateful eyes on hearing that sweet sound,  
To simple souls like them, the voice of God,  
Bidding them lay their burden at his feet,  
And be refreshed by heart-converse with Him :  
For rest of body, recreated soul,  
Come not of idle hand or vacant mind ;  
The human liveth not by bread alone,  
But more by word of God received in prayer.  
They bow their heads adoring : while their lips  
The words repeat, imagination wings  
To blessed Nazareth and Bethlehem ;  
And faith augments their vision, till they see,

Enraptured, myriad shining worlds of truth,  
Unknown, undreamed of, by the eyes of sense.

To Mary, Gabriel said: "Thou shalt conceive,  
And bear; thy Son be called the Son of God:  
The Father so decrees if thou consent."

God and the angels wait upon her word!  
Humanity forgets to groan, and breathless  
Hangs upon her lips, in hope, in fear!

She sees in halo crib of Bethlehem;  
Beyond, in gloom, a cross on Calvary.  
Her woman heart rejoices at the first;  
Her mother heart recoils before the last:—  
Recoils, but look again. If He, Divine,  
Would give His life for sinful men,  
Ought she not bear His loss for love of Him?  
But she had vowed a virgin to remain;  
Joseph had vowed: God had inspired them both:—  
Would she conceive, virginity intact?  
Isaias writ: "A virgin shall conceive;"—  
And the Omnipotent can find a way.  
In wonder if she be the maiden told  
Should bear a son and be a virgin still,

She asks the messenger: "How shall this be?"  
No doubt of God implies her tardy yea:  
'Tis her humility in deep amaze  
That God in such emprise, appeals to her.  
"How shall this be?" His guidon all she sought.  
"How shall this be?"—My Lord, what shall I  
do?"

He said: "The Holy Ghost shall come on thee."  
God had regarded her humility:  
She would conceive and still a virgin be.

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord: May it  
Be done to me according to thy word."  
And Christ her Son was born in Bethlehem.

Those scenes before their eyes, men of good will  
Can learn life lessons taught in parable.

The union hypostatic in the Christ  
Of the two natures, human and Divine,  
Makes human nature sacred; and no pride  
May scorn it henceforth, in what shape,  
However lowly, it appear to us:  
For wealth or poverty, health or disease,

The beauty or the homeliness of face,  
Fame or obscurity, the highest rank  
Or humble station, is but accident  
Which neither can enhance, nor yet detract  
From the essential dignity of man.  
Humanity wed to Divinity,  
Like peasant raised by marriage to a throne,  
Is thereby lifted to God-like state.  
The universe beside, is nothing worth:  
A child a moment born, from sole to crown  
Diseased, with single moment more to breathe,  
Outweighs in God's esteem a million worlds;  
And were there need to glad those infant eyes,  
Or cause those infant lips to ope in smile,  
He willing would make bonfire of them all;  
Or gladly build a universe more grand,—  
And spend unnumbered ages in the work,—  
To be a moment's plaything of a babe.  
With eyes upon the crib of Bethlehem,  
What parent will not shudder at the thought  
Of doing that might quench the vital spark?

The Mother of God upraises all her sex,  
Degraded hitherto for sin of Eve.



What harm our Eden mother did mankind,  
Is more than compensated by her seed.  
O happy fault of Eve, occasioning  
Such wondrous blessings to our fallen race!  
The slave of man, the toy of his caprice,  
Is now his peer. Beholding nearest God  
The Virgin seated, is there man dare look  
With eye contemptuous on the female sex?  
Aye, maiden, mother, widow, who keeps her  
In view as model, and conforms her life  
To that ideal, even distantly,  
Deserves in that proportion man's esteem.

Perpetual wedding of two human hearts  
Was crowning work of God's creative days.  
He blessed their union, bade them multiply,—  
Make creatures share in His creative power,—  
That thrones intended for the angel host  
Who sinned and fell with Lucifer from grace,  
A future day be filled by sons of men.  
For ages past, by men licentiously,  
The marriage bed, once holy, had been fouled :  
This wedlock of a virgin maid and man,  
Denying to themselves what else were good

And blessed of God, now purposed was by Him,  
Not a reproof to bridal bed and bliss,  
But silent plea for nuptial honesty,  
And tempered satisfaction of desire.

In saintly Joseph, labor is ennobled.  
Dear to God as no man other was  
Or will be, constant toil his lot in life.  
And Mary, blessed of all women, toiled ;  
And Christ toiled with His hands, content to be  
Reputed Son of Nazareth carpenter.  
That fallen man must labor, God's decree ;  
Tho' laboring in patience, as they wrought,  
Will make him happy, and perfect his powers:  
Not idleness, activity perfects;  
And man grows happy as he perfect grows.

Within that grot, the poor take heart again;  
And poverty, when not the wage of sin,  
Ought crimson no man's cheek. The Son of God,  
Creator of the world, and Lord of all,  
With angels at His beck, for natal couch,  
Preferred a manger in stable-cave.  
His mother poor, His foster-father poor,  
Poor shepherds were the first He chose to call.

Yet lack of riches was not that He blessed;  
But poverty of spirit, counting dross,—  
Compared to grace and heaven,—beauty, strength,  
And station, wealth and fame; at best a means,  
The stepping-stones to things of greater worth;—  
And Jacob's Star found poverty in kings.  
Man was not made for earth, nor may attach  
His heart to aught below the highest, God;  
For God alone can satisfy the soul.  
And He so loveth, He can never brook  
A rival. Whoso trusteth in himself  
As all-sufficient, or in anything  
Created, cannot hope to be with God.

And poverty is term comparative;  
For many with abundance, feel them poor,  
In envy of a neighbor's larger store;  
Or chafe to see a fig beyond their reach,  
As Aman, first in favor of the king,  
Could find no rest, a courtesy denied.  
And doubtless will it so be to the end,  
Diversity of fortune, the result  
Of various talent, aim and will, and work.  
Nor doth God use one meter in the skies:

The saints and angels differ as the stars.  
Yet differential bounty of the Lord  
Impeaches not His justice: all we are  
And have, is gift of His gratuitous.  
In God's world plan, each one hath place;  
And none so low, but playing his part well,  
Shall win reward proportioned to his zeal.  
'Tis not the part, but doing well, wins praise.  
Beside, the part deem men deem the lowliest,  
A larger view of God's eternal scheme  
Proves most important in the Master's mind.  
Uplifting of the world from sin to grace,  
Was work stupendous God assigned those three,  
Unknown and poor, who could not find an inn  
At Bethlehem. A man to play the part  
Of wealth and power, readier volunteers,  
Than act the role of penury and toil.  
A common soul would willing be a Job  
In wealth and station: none but highest type  
Could be a Job diseased, bereft of herds  
And children, seated amid filth, and chid  
By lesser men, his one-time friends, with scorn,  
And still retain his faith in God and man.  
The more exacting roles, of toil, disease,

Obscurity, ill-fame unmerited,  
Oppression, wrong, and sorrow-laden heart,  
Allotted are to richest dowered souls.  
Affliction trieth hearts as furnace gold.

A slavish cowardice, God counsels not,  
In bearing ills for long, of easy cure ;  
Nor wills endeavor halt until the earth  
Be made the fittest home for sons of God,  
Detained awhile that they may merit heaven.  
He rather would men follow His own plan:—  
He made the world imperfect, satisfied  
To watch primeval cloud of formless dust,  
Obedient to the laws He first imposed,  
Develop rythmic into countless orbs  
That roll in perfect harmony, like tones  
Of some grand organ played by Master hand.  
His love increasing as His plan unfolds,  
He gives free rein to His creative power,  
And graces later days with forms of life:  
A flower first, His love complete in man ;  
Like loving touches of an artist's hand,  
Perfecting beauty of his masterpiece.

Slow process this from dust to universe.

Creating man, God breathes upon a cell;  
A soul infused in matter makes it grow.  
For months, it seems inanimate, a part  
Of her whose heart supplies it nourishment.  
A child at first, it learns by slow degrees  
To know the outer world, to know itself,  
And then from both to reason up to God.  
It reasons God, and faith extends its vision.  
Knowing God, it learns to hope and love.  
And knowing, trusting, loving Him, it strives,  
With grace, to do His will because it loves,  
And anxious waits the bliss of His embrace.

Slow process this, from life-cell unto Saint:—  
With many halts, discouragements and falls;  
Yet God all patiently and lovingly  
Supplies the needed grace at every turn.  
Nor gives He grace as pride might toss a coin  
To mendicant despised, from afar off.  
He bears the gift in person, like a friend;  
Enters the soul, unites it to himself,  
In such a wise that tho it still be free,  
Distinct from God, He makes it like Himself  
In beauty by degrees, and makes it see

And thus what it could else not know or do,  
It clearly comprehends, and does with ease.

The key-note of the Angelus is love,  
Lost chord of music, sung in paradise,  
Unheard of human ear since first man fell,  
His ear distracted by his heart's discord,  
Now heard again with joy when angel choir  
On Christmas morn sang, "Glory unto God,  
And peace on earth unto men of good will."

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Conserving it ; His wisdom evident  
In universal reign of law ; justice  
Meting condign punishment on crime,  
Whether of Cain, who sinned alone, or state  
Most populous, like Chanaan, which the Lord  
Condemned to perish ; mercy infinite  
To humble penitence ;—His love in all.  
God's love explains creation of the world :  
For love alone creates : Creation means  
The overflow of the parental heart.  
Choice souls in every age had known this truth,  
The basis of all wisdom ; but God willed  
To give a proof which all must understand.  
As human hearts that truly love can find  
One sole expression adequate, a child,  
God wed His nature unto man's, and Christ  
Was born, the pledge of love reciprocal.





## II.



THE MASSES of mankind are like  
those two :

Not ignorant, or vicious, or in  
want ;

But earning by their toil and  
frugal care

Enough to shelter, clothe, and victual them.  
They hope the future hath in store for them  
And children brighter days than they have known :  
Nor do they hesitate to voice their hopes,  
And try to realize their dreams. Not slaves  
To kings, or priests, in theory or fact,  
They call for justice when they suffer wrong ;  
Nor will believe that men of wealth or power  
In state or Church take pleasure crushing them.  
They still believe the heart is mainly good  
In all mankind of high or low degree.

The Angelus awakes them from their sleep,  
And bids them ask a blessing on the day :

At noon, it bids them pause and ask new strength  
Of soul in prayer, and blessing on their bread ;  
At even, bids them offer thanks to God  
For all the favors of the day now done,  
Protection of His angels for the night.  
Thus all their life is one continuous prayer,  
Observant of His counsel given men ;  
And thus in every act of all the day  
Increasing merit for the life beyond :  
Continuous union here of soul with God,  
Becomes a beatific vision there.

Yea : tho they sweat, and suffer much, and feel  
To them injustice done,—and God permits,—  
They still retain full faith in God and man.  
Their hope of future life to recompense  
The patient sufferance of the ills of earth,  
Is woven in the fibre of their souls,  
And like a golden thread it brightens all.  
Tho pessimists and demagogues may rant,  
The people are, and wisely are content,  
While striving hopefully for better things.  
The toiler's face grows brighter drawing near  
His cottage door. His children's merry laughter,

Sweetest music to his ear. They live :  
Each one a re-creation of himself  
In life's fair morn, ere sin and sorrow kissed ;  
And for their sake, and her's who bore them to  
him,  
Toil is pleasure, strife a tournament,  
His home a paradise, his life a song.



### III.



HE WORLD has better grown  
since Christ was born ;  
Grows better every day in every  
way.

Now steam and electricity, in  
yoke

Are docile steeds to man's triumphal car.  
Marconi, wedding ether, adds the skies  
To our demesne : like spirits, we converse  
With distant brother as tho space were not.  
And Roentgen adds such power to human eyes,  
That substances opaque seem crystalline.  
To Edison's weird genius, even sound  
Is willing captive ; and the widowed heart  
May hear the voice of loved one speaking still.

Nor is the end attained or sought in this  
Commercial only. It has made us feel,  
As never felt, the brotherhood of men.  
Not mountain range, or river, or the sea

Divides man from his brothers. All are one,  
The sons of Adam, fallen by his sin,  
Redeemed by sacrifice of the one Christ.  
Tho differ sex and color, race and creed,  
All stand as children equal born of God.

While men are men, it may be only wars  
At intervals can teach them to love peace;  
But wars are far less frequent, and less cruel;  
Even bullets must be merciful;  
The battle over, enemies are friends,  
And mingle on the field to bury dead,  
And bring to wounded comrades quick relief;  
The Sister, with impartial charity,  
Sees only brothers, not a friend and foe.

A hundred warring clans are now a state :  
A hundred helpless states, one strong empire ;  
Yet not a part, how far remote, but shares  
The equal care of king or president.  
His eye, his ear, his hand, can reach them all,  
To see their needs, to hear their prayers, to guide,  
To guard, to punish crime, reward the good,  
To crush rebellion ere it waxes strong,  
Repel unjust attack from every side.

Today all science must be practical;  
The savant seeketh wisdom for the good  
His knowledge may impart to all the race,  
Not for the selfish end that he may know:  
Each truth discovered, noble deed performed,  
Is common heritage enriching all.

There is not a slave in any Christian land.  
The sick, the maimed, the poor, the orphan child,  
The aged, wilted blooms of maidenhood,  
And the insane, most helpless of all men,  
Find shelter in asylums, never known  
Before the Christ taught pity unto men.

Fair truth is better known and better loved.  
Mere germ of knowledge of an earlier age,  
By nurture of the intellect is grown  
To fairest flower of truth, delighting men.  
From wedding of two distant premises,  
New truths are born in the synthetic mind.

Point not thy finger at the mire of sin.  
'Tis but a puddle, not the whole of earth;  
'Tis only pimple on the skin, not man.

He is mental suicide or moral wreck,  
Thinks no man honest, and no woman pure,

Call not this age idolatrous of gold,  
When wealth is tainted if it look on fraud;  
When death o'ertaking wealth is deemed a crime.  
When Carnegie with treble Croesus' wealth,  
Confesses it is not his, but rather God's,  
Himself a steward for dispensing it.

Let no one sigh that Calvary was vain,  
When leprosy attracts a Damien;  
When havoc wrought by earthquake shock and  
fire,  
Becomes occasion for sweet charity,  
Not cause of wild despair, blaspheming God;  
When sons of Clovis, heralds of the faith  
To half the world, now show by sacrifice  
The value set upon the gift bestowed;  
When Czar, once synonym of despot rule  
In church and state, of his free will, not forced,  
Makes millions freemen, partners of his power;  
When Christians fairly treat the patient Jew,—  
Who gave them Sinai's tables and the Christ;  
When Philips, as Castilian warship sinks,

The decks with dead and dying strewn,  
Uplifting hand, bids: "Comrades, do not cheer:  
Brave men are dying!" Instant quiet reigns;  
And victors stand uncovered, while the priest  
Thanks God for victory, prays mercy on the dead;  
When Sherman calls the battlefield a hell;  
And "The Hague" is shrine where war lords  
worship peace;

When Erin's sons, a thousand years oppressed,  
Still bravely fight, and hope for liberty;  
When Gladstone, at the zenith of his power,  
The premier of the proudest race on earth,  
At risk of place and good will of his own,  
For love of justice, champions Ireland's cause;  
When peasant follows prince on Peter's throne;  
When kings pay homage to a priest in chains;  
And power asketh wisdom how to rule;  
And earth is draped in black at Leo's death.

Then say not golden age a memory  
Of sinless Eden lost. Christ rules the world!  
The Pentecostal Spirit lives in men!  
The golden age had dawned when woman spoke  
Man's saving fiat of the Angelus.

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